

F.G.B. Hawkins

(*Men of Western Australia*, 1937, plate 88 cropped; *The Architect*, March 1956, p.12)

Frederick George Brudenell-Bruce Hawkins (1885-1956) was born in South Africa. Hawkins was articled from 1900 to Glasgow-born architect Arthur Fyfe at Durban, where he attended Durban Art School and Technical College. When Fyfe retired to England in 1905, Hawkins also relocated and there he attended University College London and the Trades Training School in Great Titchfield Street, London. In 1905-1906 he was an assistant to Thomas Anderson Moodie (1874-1948), followed by a period in the Hampstead office of influential engineer, architect and town planner Sir Raymond Unwin (1863-1940).

During 1909 Hawkins passed the qualifying exam and was admitted as an Associate of the Royal British Institute of Architects in February 1910. He then became an assistant to Sir Aston Webb (1849-1930), before being appointed Chief Architect to the Improvement Trust of Bombay. With the advent of the First World War, Hawkins served with the Indian Defence Force during 1914-1918, and returned to Bombay in 1919. Hawkins came to practice in Australia, at Melbourne in 1923. With Kew-born Marcus Ronald Barlow (1890–1954) he formed the highly successful firm of Grainger Little Barlow and Hawkins. John Henry Grainger and John Little had both died in 1917, so initially the firm was carrying on the latent goodwill of their names. By 1926 the practice was known simply as Barlow & Hawkins.

Barlow & Hawkins were responsible for many notable buildings - including Temple Court (1924) at 422–428 Collins Street, Melbourne; Spry Bros (Public Benefit) Bootery (1925) at 323–325 Bourke Street, Melbourne, and Colinton (1926) at 92 Mont Albert Road in Canterbury. In 1927 Hawkins was president of the T-Square Club in Melbourne, whose influential membership included artists and other erstwhile architects such as club-founder Harold Desbrowe-Annear (1865-1933). Also in 1927, George Gavin Lawson (1882-1953) joined

Barlow and Hawkins to form an Adelaide office of the practice titled Barlow, Hawkins and Lawson. By 1929 the partnership had dissolved with Hawkins commencing practice in Perth, but Barlow and Lawson continued in South Australia until 1930. Marcus Barlow went on to design a number of highly prominent buildings for Melbourne, including the Manchester Unity (1932) and Century (1940) Buildings.

In 1928 Hawkins had arrived in Perth to supervise the construction of the £30,000 Victoria Insurance Company Building in St George's Terrace, and seeing opportunities, decided to stay and work in WA on his own account. One of many earlier twentieth century buildings demolished in Perth's rabid demolition period (fuelled by resource riches), the six-storey steel-reinforced concrete offices were located just east of the surviving Palace Hotel. Hawkins duly registered with the Architects Board of WA in March 1929 (no.124), and his wife soon voyaged to join him from Melbourne.

Western Australia's first female architect, Margaret Pitt Morison (1900-1985) was employed by Hawkins c.1929-1931, her work including documenting the design of the Atlas Assurance Co Office, however during the Depression Margaret was retrenched. The Atlas Building, surviving today, is a four-storey building with a basement, constructed in the Inter-War Free Classical style and opened in April 1931. This building on The Esplanade in Perth was designed by Hawkins on his own account, and also cost £30,000.

Within Perth he was also responsible for the Yorkshire Insurance Building (1931) at 194 St George's Terrace, and in association with Robertson, Marks & McCredie of Melbourne for the Mercantile Mutual Insurance Building at 179 St George's Terrace (1939); as well as carrying out a considerable amount of domestic and industrial works in the city and suburbs. Hawkins designed the Margaret River Hotel, opened in 1936, and the core of this building remains today as part of a much loved country destination.

In the 1937 publication *Men of Western Australia*, Hawkins' work listed included: the Victoria Building, Atlas Offices, Yorkshire House, Messrs McPhersons, Woolworth's, Walsh's Limited, Dunklings, Wigmore's, Boans Limited, Soap Distributors, R.P. North's, Barnett Bros, Margaret River Hotel, flats, residences, etc. ... Hawkins was primarily a commercial architect in the 1930s, although he

was versatile enough to also undertake quite a number of domestic works. With materials shortages, post-war work of the late 1940s was quite limited, and Hawkins took on a number of lesser house projects in this period.

Approaching retirement, in 1951 Hawkins entered into partnership with a former apprentice, the much younger Desmond Sands (1911-1999), creating one of the most important and innovative architectural offices in post-war Perth. Hawkins died 27 January 1956 aged 71 years, leaving Sands to carry on the practice name of F.G.B. Hawkins & Desmond Sands.

References:

- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 22 October 1927, p.15 (Barlow & Hawkins, Victoria Ins Bldg).
- 'Collins Street Trams', *The Argus*, 5 December 1927, p.19 (President T-Square Club).
- 'Social Notes', *The West Australian*, 17 May 1929, p.7 (Victoria House architect, wife arrives).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 15 February 1930, p.10 (5 storey offices Atlas Assurance).
- 'Insurance Company's Building', *The West Australian*, 22 February 1930, p.9 (Yorkshire Ins).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 14 July 1934, p.3 (extensive additions to Boans in Perth).
- 'Boans Limited', *The West Australian*, 10 August 1934, p.4 (Clerk of Works reqd.).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 17 November 1934, p.3 (flats Vincent Street Mount Lawley).
- 'Hawkins, F.G.B.', *Men of Western Australia, representative of the public, professional, ecclesiastical, commercial and sporting life of Western Australia as existant (sic) in the years 1936-1937*, V.H. Colless, Perth, 1937, plate 88.
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 5 February 1948, p.19 (Peerless Flour Mills Offices Guildford).
- 'Special Advertisements', *The West Australian*, 29 August 1951, p.2 (Hawkins joined by Sands).
- 'Clerk of Works', *The Argus*, 17 September 1955, p.22 (reqd. for 10 storey MLC Building Perth).
- The Architect*, 'F.G.B. Hawkins, FRIBA, FRAIA', vol 3, issue 1, March 1956, p.12.
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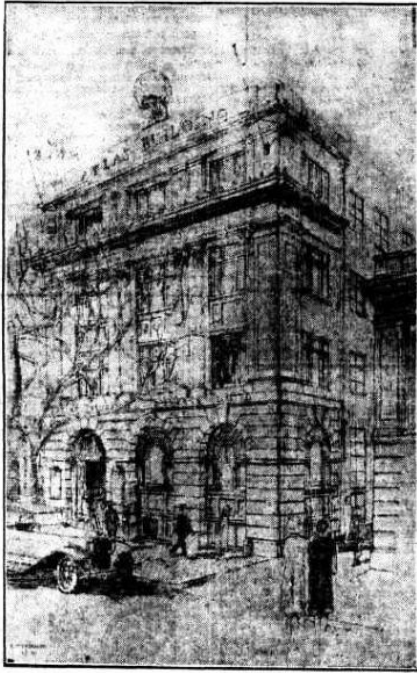
Taylor, Dr John J., 'Frederick George Brudenell-Bruce Hawkins (1885-1956)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.architecture.com.au/> accessed DATE.



Temple Court of 1924 at 422–428 Collins Street in Melbourne, designed by Grainger Little Barlow and Hawkins (Wikipedia).



Now demolished, Hawkins' first project in Perth was the Victoria Insurance Company Building at 98-102 St George's Terrace (at left of photo), completed in early 1929 (SLWA 360986PD)

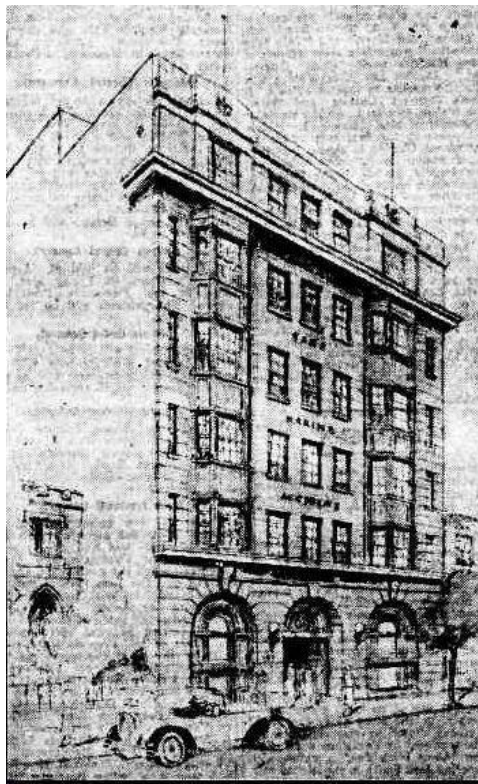


THE ATLAS ASSURANCE CO'S NEW BUILDING

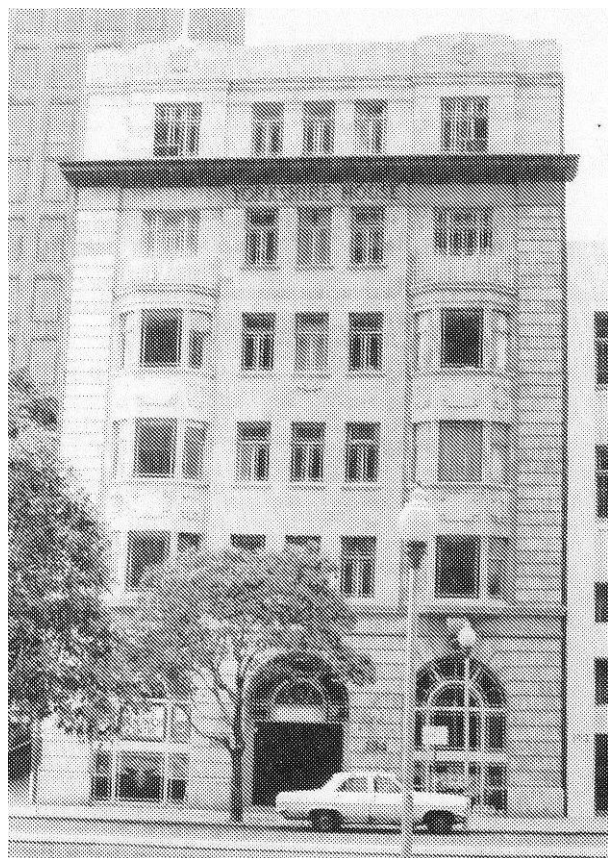
This very attractive architectural addition to the city is to be erected at the corner of St. George's Court and the Esplanade. Tenders have closed, and range from £84,786 to £49,861, but none has been accepted yet. The work, which is in the hands of Mr. F. G. B. Hawkins, architect, of Victoria House, will be commenced in the immediate future.



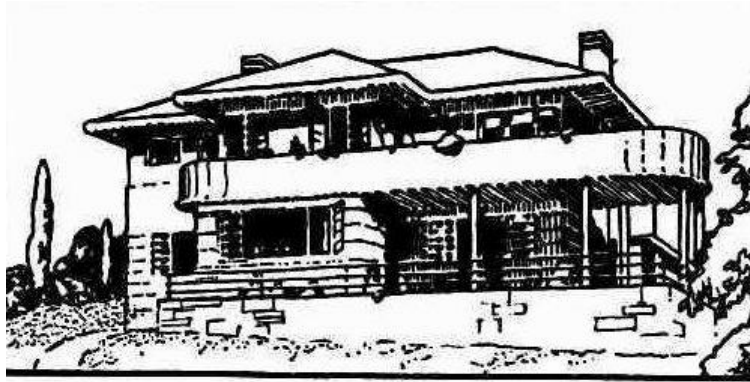
The Atlas Building opened in 1931 at the corner of The Esplanade and Sherwood Court in Perth
(*Daily News*, 13 March 1930, p.9; SLWA 095428PD)



Estimated to cost £43,142, a building of six storeys and a basement will be erected in St. George's Terrace, on the east side of The Cloisters, for the Yorkshire Insurance Company, Ltd. Mr. F. G. B. Hawkins is the architect, and Mr. H. U. Ritchie the contractor.



Now demolished, the Yorkshire Insurance Building opened in 1931 at 194 St George's Terrace in Perth (*The West Australian*, 15 March 1930, p.7; Molyneux, Ian, *Looking Around Perth*, p.57).



Perspective drawing of a two-storey brick residence to be built in Ridge-street, South Perth, at a cost of about £3,000. The main features of the design are its low horizontal lines. The architects are Mr. F. G. B. Hawkins and Associates.

Ridge Street, South Perth residence (*The West Australian*, 28 December 1935, p.6).



Margaret River Hotel c.1936 (www.margaretriverhotel.com.au)



Perspective drawing of the building, comprising five storeys and a basement, to be erected in St. George's-terrace for the Mercantile Mutual Insurance Co., Ltd. With equipment it will cost over £52,000. The tender of Concrete Constructions (W.A.), Ltd., was accepted this week. The architects are Messrs. Robertson, Marks and McCredie, in association with Mr. F. G. B. Hawkins.



Sketch for Mercantile Mutual Building; and (right of photo) at 179 St George's Terrace, Perth in 1947 (*The West Australian*, 30 October 1937, p.8; SLWA 000212D).